

Hearing [Feb. 15, 1898] on House joint resolution 68, providing as follows

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

BEFORE THE S COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY FEBRUARY 15, 1898.

HEARING ON HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 68, PROVIDING AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. THE RIGHT OF CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES TO VOTE SHALL NOT BE DENIED OR ABRIDGED BY THE UNITED STATES OR BY ANY STATE ON ACCOUNT OF SEX."

"SECTION 2. THE CONGRESS SHALL HAVE POWER, BY APPROPRIATE LEGISLATION, TO ENFORCE THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ARTICLE."

J K 1888 1898

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FEMALE SUFFRAGE. -SCHOOL SUFFRAGE AND OTHER LIMITED SUFFRAGISTS IN THE UNITED STATES.By Ellen H. E. Price, Swarthmore, Pa.

School suffrage is the logical conclusion of one of the most marked tendencies of the public-school system. Coeducation of the sexes is increasingly a tendency of the system, and coeducation naturally leads to a joint participation of men and women in the teaching force and management of the schools. Coeducation of the youth also results in a juster appreciation of each other's abilities and weaknesses; in fact it is claimed that the greater freedom in selection of occupation enjoyed by American women over those of any other country is mainly due to the influence of coeducation in the mental development of American boys and girls.

Conservatism as regard what are called woman's natural functions, which is so strong a force in keeping the ballot from women, is met on its own ground by school suffrage. Who should care for the education of the children; who should have the judgement to know what conditions are necessary for the perfect development of the young, and the power and skill to provide such conditions, if not the mothers of the race?

Women's participation in suffrage depends upon the votes of men. Fully three-fourths of the people of the United States are educated in the public schools, and are more or less influenced by the conditions of their social life. Adding this influence to the commonly accepted thought that women—if they have any right to consideration in the political world at all—have it by reason of the duties

of motherhood, it is plain to be seen why in so many States some modification of school suffrage exists. Yet it is all the more difficult to understand why such strenuous exertions in most cases have had to be made to secure this privilege to women, and why almost constant vigilance is required in some States to keep it.

The first recognition of woman as a factor in public education has been generally the extension of the privilege to serve the immediate community in the capacity of director or trustee without any power to help elect to such offices.¹ As the community in which a woman lives is but a slight extension of the home in which she rears her children, this recognition of the fact that the qualities which make her the guide and guard of the children of the home are needed in the maintenance of the school—the protection of the community—is natural and conservative enough.

1 Although in the State of Washington women may vote for State superintendent of public instruction, but are not eligible to the office; and in Mississippi women, heads of families, may vote for trustees, but may not serve in that capacity.

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That this privilege has in so many States been gradually extended to what are commonly called the higher offices, and that the right to vote for such officers has afterwards, in so many cases, been granted, is proof positive that the duties of the more limited field have been discharged and the responsibilities met in a manner satisfactory to the lawmakers in the several States where the experiment has been tried.

Sixty years ago Kentucky legislators, seeing the necessity of family representation in school matters, gave school suffrage to widows, thus earning for their State the proud distinction of being the first to make official recognition of woman's interest in the line of work which all grant to be preeminently hers. Leaving out of consideration the States where women have full suffrage, we find some form of school suffrage existing in 21 States and 2 Territories. It is interesting to note in all but three of these the right has been given by legislative enactment, although in Wisconsin the act of the legislature was afterwards submitted to a popular vote. Consequently the number of States in which the grant has been made by the few, the representatives of the people, is 20; where it has been secured by the direct vote of the people, is 4.

Other forms of limited suffrage have been granted to women by the legislatures of 5 States. In Mississippi women who are heads of families may vote for "fence or no fence;" in Illinois, if property owners, they may vote for district drainage commissioners, and in Louisiana, if owners of real estate in a drainage district, they may vote on plans of drainage and the amount of tax to be levied. The women of Iowa may vote on the same terms with men on the issuing of bonds for municipal

or school purposes, or for borrowing money or increasing the tax levy. In Michigan, since 1867, women taxpayers have had the right to vote on all questions affecting the levying of tax for school purposes. Montana, by constitution, permits women who pay tax to vote on all questions submitted to taxpayers.

In analysis of the limited suffrage thus far granted to women, we find that when any qualification¹ at all is specified it is on one of these two lines, payment of tax or children of school age under care of the voter—that is, the franchise has been extended when certain generally admitted interests would otherwise be unrepresented. The interest of the property holder is very marked in the instances given above, and the property qualification is required in all but one of the States mentioned. Women taxpayers may vote on that qualification alone for school trustee in Montana, and on all questions pertaining to school management in Michigan, Nebraska, Indiana, Vermont, and in districts of more than 1,000 inhabitants in Oregon. Especially in school matters there obtains largely the idea of the family unit with the man was the natural representative. The justice of transferring the representing power to widows or to women who are heads of families of young children has appealed effectively to men in six States. The right to vote for trustees and all subordinate offices has been assured to widows in Kentucky; to widows and mothers of children of school age in districts of less than 1,000 inhabitants in Oregon; to women who are listed as parents, guardians, or heads of families in Indiana; to any head of a family, or widow with children of school age, or female guardian of a child of school age in Florida; to all heads of families who are free holders in Mississippi, and to any parent or guardian of children whose names appear in the school census in Michigan.

1 With Massachusetts as a notable exception in having an educational qualification.

The interest manifested by women in the suffrage, and the use they⁵ make of it, is always and everywhere proportional to the importance in the popular mind of the issue at stake. As might be expected from the more general interest of the people in the public schools in the North and Northwest, it is in those sections that women's interest in school suffrage is greatest and their participation in it most general. Wherever the right has been exercised, the testimony is borne to the improvement in the condition of the schools and in the financial standing of the district, and to the development of character in the voters themselves. Omitting the States of Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and Idaho, where women have full suffrage, and Kansas, where municipal suffrage obtains, we find that some form of school or other limited suffrage is exercised by women in States containing a total population¹ of 31,377,654 (more than half of the whole population), and covering an area of 167,305 square miles—nearly one-half of the whole area of the United States. When we remember that it has been only sixty years since the first State gave any suffrage to women, we can not be discouraged

by this showing, especially when we consider the slow progress of every reform the world has ever seen.

1 Census of 1890.

For convenience in reference is added a tabular statement, chronologically arranged, of the grant of limited suffrage to women in the United States:

Tabular statement, chronologically arranged, of the grant of limited suffrage to women in the United States.

Date. State. How granted. Class Qualification. Extent of privilege. 1938 Kentucky Act of legislature. Widows Taxable property. School trustees. 1845 do do Spinsters do Do. 1861 Kansas do Women All school questions. 1865 Indiana do Widows with children of school age; woman guardian. Guardianship Directors; questions of school management. 1867 Michigan do Women taxpayers. Taxable property. All questions involving the raising of money. 1859 Florida do Head of family; widow with children; female guardian. Guardianship Trustees and all subordinate school officers. 1872 Oregon do {Widows and mothers in districts of less than 1,000.} do District officers. {Women taxpayers in districts of more than 1,000.} {Payment of tax} 1876 Colorado Constitution Women Same as men All school matters. 1876 Minnesota Constitutional amendment. do do All school officers. 1878 New Hampshire Act of legislature. do do Do. 1878 Massachusetts do do Must be able to read and write. School committee. 1885 New York do do Same as men School taxes; school officers, except school commissioner and in chartered cities. 1880 Vermont do do Payment of tax All questions. 1861 Michigan do {Women property owners. do Do. {Women parents or guardians. Guardianship. All questions which do not involve the raising of money by tax. 6 1883 Nebraska Act of legislature. Women Same as men At all district meetings. 1885^a Illinois do Women property owners. Taxable property. District drainage commissioners. 1885 Wisconsin Act of legislature; vote of the people. Women Same as men School officers in country districts; raising money for school purposes. 1885 Idaho Act of legislature. do do All school questions. 1887 Arizona do do do 1887 New Jersey do do do School trustees^b; appropriations. 1889 North Dakota Constitution do do All school questions. 1889 South Dakota Act of legislature. Widows Directors and school treasurer. 1889 Montana Constitution^c {All women Same as men Any district officer and county superintendent of schools. {Taxpaying women. do All questions submitted to taxpayers. 1889 Delaware Act of legislature. Women taxpayers in the city of Wilmington. Payment of tax School officers in the city of Wilmington. 1890 Washington do Women Same as men All school elections. 1891 Illinois do do do All school officers except county superintendent. 1892 South Dakota do do do Directors and school treasurer. 1893 Connecticut do do do All matters of school management. 1893 Iowa do do do Issuing of bonds. 1894 Ohio do do do Members of board of education. 1894 Kentucky

do Women in cities of the second class. do Members of board of education and district tax. 1894 Louisiana do Women property owners. Payment of tax Plans of drainage; amount of tax to be levied. 1894 Mississippi Heads of families who are property owners. Property and guardianship. Fence or no fence; trustees. 1894 Oklahoma.

a Probably earlier.

b Lost in 1894 by decision of supreme court as far as voting for trustees is concerned. Said decision does not affect the voting for appropriations.

c Although women had the right of school suffrage while Montana was a Territory.

MUNICIPAL SUFFRAGE IN KANSAS. By J. W. Gleed.

From the very beginning Kansas law has recognized the equality of the sexes—the equality of man and wife—in all matters except the right of suffrage. With this exception no discrimination has been made against women. The wife has the same interest in the husband's property that the husband has in the wife's. She controls her property to the same extent that he controls his. She has the same separate existence before the law that he has. In some respects, indeed, the law discriminates in her favor, women enjoying some privileges and 7 immunities not enjoyed by men. The one badge of equality denied her was the guaranty of the continuance of this equal treatment—the right to vote. But the right to vote has been coming to her piecemeal. In 1876 she was given the right to vote for school officers, and in 1887 the legislature passed what is known as the municipal suffrage act.

The municipal suffrage act provides that in any election held in any city of first, second, or third class, for the election of city or school officers, or for the issuance of any bonds for school purposes, the right of any citizen to vote shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex; that women may vote at such elections the same as men; that any woman possessing the qualifications of a voter shall also be eligible to any such city or school office. In Kansas the words “cities of the first, second, and third classes” embrace what in many communities would be described by the words “cities, towns, and villages,” so that under the act women have a voice in the government of practically all of the cities, towns, and villages, except the few hamlets so small as not to be incorporated as cities of the third class. In all such communities they have a vote on all school-bond propositions, but not on other bond propositions. They have no part in the selection of county or State officers, nor in the selection of any judicial officer, as justices of the peace and judges of the higher courts, except that in cities of the second and third classes they have a vote on police judge. In cities of the first class they have nothing to do with the police system in any way, because of the metropolitan police act which puts the police systems of cities of the first class in the control of the governor. But in all cities women may vote for mayor and councilmen and school officers.

The municipal suffrage act was passed by a legislature, which was overwhelmingly Republican, and was passed by a large majority in each house. It was supported and approved by three-fourths of the Republican papers of the State.

In discussing the results of the act there is not very much in the way of concrete, demonstrable facts, figures, and statistics to present. A good deal that is said must necessarily be individual observation and opinion. The statistics upon city elections for the years 1887 and 1888 show that, taking the State as a whole, about one-third of the women of the State availed themselves of the voting privilege. In 1893, in the city of Topeka, about two-thirds of the women registered and voted; that is to say, the registration of women and men was in the ratio of about four to six. There is one thing certain and admitted, and that is that not one of the evil results so often and generally predicted from the participation of women in elections has been observed. There is not a recorded instance of a woman being insulted at the polls. I think it is fair to state that it is generally admitted that elections have been much more orderly since the passage of this act.

The following observations may be more or less a matter of dispute, but I make them as my opinions based on careful observation. In ordinary city elections, where the candidates on both sides are reasonably respectable and competent men and the issue is simply the ordinary party issue, women take little interest and their vote is light. They do not appreciate a city campaign based, as so many of them are, on national issues. They do not appreciate the connection between the question of good municipal government and the question of the tariff or the national currency. It may be proper to observe that there is a large and increasing body of male voters who do not appreciate it either. Where a man of bad political character or bad personal character is a candidate for city office, women take a great deal more interest, and in 8 such case are more independent of party ties than men are. The same is true when any moral issue is involved. A great many women who vote, vote as a matter of duty and feel it something of a burden. But this is also true of a great many men. The women who vote are the more thoughtful and conscientious class of women. There has been no rush for office on the part of women. They seem almost universally to refer that men should hold the offices. In two or three instances women have been elected to the position of mayor and to the position of councilman. The results have been good.

The influence of municipal suffrage for women has been to secure a better class of nominees on the average. The police systems of cities of the first class being independent of city government, women have not taken as much interest in elections in cities of the first class as they otherwise probably would. From an early day women in Kansas, who were dependent upon their own exertions for their livelihood, have had considerable employment in the public service, but that employment has increased since the passage of this act and women's opportunities have been greater. Women

have held positions upon boards controlling the higher institutions of learning and State charitable institutions. They have been employed as professors in the State university and the State normal and agricultural colleges. They have been superintendents of city schools, principals of high schools, and county superintendents. They have been county and city treasurers and have held a large number of responsible subordinate positions in the public service. A woman has held the position of assistant attorney-general.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN WYOMING. By Joseph M. Carey.

Woman suffrage, as exercised in the State of Wyoming, has been so well discussed for twenty-five years that any extended remarks at this time would be but a repetition of those made many times heretofore.

Wyoming was organized as a Territory in 1869. The legislature, composed of a council and house of representatives, each of which was unanimously Democratic, after some discussion, passed a bill conferring upon women full political rights through both houses, which was approved by John A. Campbell, governor of the Territory.

The law was very brief and is in the following words:

That every woman of the age of 21 years residing in this Territory may, at every election to be holden under the laws thereof, cast her vote. And her rights to the effective franchise and to hold office shall be the same under the election laws of the Territory as those of electors.

Two years thereafter a new legislature was elected, and a bill was introduced in the house of representatives for the repeal of the suffrage act referred to. It passed both houses, and was vetoed by the governor, John A. Campbell, who two years previously had signed the law which the legislature attempted to repeal.

This caused a protracted discussion in each house of the legislature. The house of representatives passed the bill by a two-thirds vote over the governor's veto, but it was lost in the council by one vote. This was in 1871.

From that time until the present, a period of twenty-seven years, there has never been any effort made to repeal the law which gave to woman full political rights in Wyoming.

In 1889 a constitutional convention, elected by the people of Wyoming, prepared a constitution, and the people thereafter ratified the same. This constitution was submitted to Congress, and with it Wyoming was admitted as a State in 1890. The suffrage article in the constitution is as follows:

The rights of citizens of the State of Wyoming to vote and hold office shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex. Both male and female citizens of this state shall equally enjoy all civil, political, and religious rights and privileges.

It will be noted that it carried out the idea enacted into a law in 1869 with this advance, limiting suffrage as follows:

No person shall have the right to vote who shall not be able to read the constitution of this State. The provision of this section shall not apply to any person presented by physical disability from complying with its requirements.

By various acts of the legislature, women, in every respect, before the laws of the State, are equal to men. They have the right to vote, sit on juries, hold office by election or appointment. Women can transact business on their own account free from the interference of their husbands. They can sell their individual real estate, personal or mixed property, without their husbands joining in the deed or bill of sale.

Equality of political rights for the two sexes is as firmly in the fundamental law and in the minds of all the people of Wyoming as any institution can be fixed in an American State.

After a close observation for all these years, I have no hesitation in saying that I have failed to see any disadvantage whatever arising from women exercising the right of suffrage and full political rights. They show as marked ability, as discriminating a sense of duty, in the exercise of their political rights as do their fathers, husbands, or brothers. They have sought office to a very limited extent, yet they exercise their right of suffrage as generally and as intelligently as do the men of the State. They have filled many places of responsibility, some elective, others appointive. The possession of political rights has opened many places of employment to women which otherwise would be closed.

Wyoming has a magnificent school system, and the public schools may be said to be in the control of the women of the State. The most of the teachers are women, the majority of those who go to school meetings are women. The superintendent of public instruction of the State is a woman, the county superintendents are generally women, the clerks and employees in the State capitol and in the court-houses, as a rule, are women.

The advantages have been many. A disorderly primary meeting in Wyoming is unknown, the elections are quiet, the most modest woman feels perfectly free at the polling booth or to serve as an election officer.

Suffrage broadens her views and makes her take an interest in that which is of the highest importance to the home. I have never known a family trouble or a family feud to originate in this State the basis of which was politics or that remotely grew out of the fact that women had the same political rights as men. I might add that I have repeatedly known husband and wife to vote directly opposite to each other and to express political opinions in opposition to each other.

All good reforms move slowly. It takes discussion, agitation, and education to remove a long standing prejudice and conviction, but woman suffrage has come to stay where it has been adopted, and it will make headway and will eventually, I believe, encompass all of the States. No other extension of suffrage ever made has brought so much advantage and so little disadvantage.

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WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN COLORADO. By Martha A. Bushnell Conine.

The question repeatedly asked of the citizens of Colorado, "What are the results of woman suffrage?" From the hearts of all lovers of justice and equality in Colorado to-day goes up one earnest, emphatic protest against the query. With one voice we reply: "It is too soon to expect well-defined results." I have not presumed to offer any individual opinion in a matter of such vital moment, but have gathered from many of my fellow-citizens, men and women in responsible position in society, church, club, and public office, an answer to the question, from which I have arranged, not a symposium—I have neither time nor space for that—but a composite. Its features are portrayed in a letter kindly furnished me by the governor of our State, Hon. Alva Adams. It is a copy of one written in reply to that same query from Iowa. Governor Adams says:

Woman suffrage needs not the defense of results; it is not a question of expediency, but of justice.

When the question was submitted in Colorado, I supported and voted for the proposition as a question of abstract right; as every man must admit, when the question comes to him, that a woman has the same right of suffrage as a man. In advocating suffrage you need no platform but right and justice; those who will not accept it upon that ground will not be persuaded though one rose from the dead.

I will, however, add that even the most virulent enemy of woman suffrage can not prove that any harm has come from the experiment. The test in Colorado is still too new to expect a unanimous verdict, yet all fair-minded observers are justified in predicting a higher standard of morals and political life as a result of woman suffrage.

This letter expresses the unanimous opinion of all those to whom I applied. We challenge the world to prove that one of the evils prophesied has come to pass. The women as a rule appreciate their freedom and are willing to assume their responsibilities is beyond question. That there are few who shrink from such responsibility and profess themselves disappointed at the results thus far we do not deny, yet we believe it would be a very dangerous experiment to attempt to take the ballot even from this class, since their consciously or unconsciously they have moved forward and are occupying a higher plane than when enfranchised.

Surely the most intelligent men and women of Colorado have in no uncertain terms signified their approval of the new order.

To offset reports the most prominent persons in the State, prominent because of their representative character, have volunteered the following statement:

We, citizens of the State of Colorado, desire, as lovers of truth and justice, to give our testimony to the value of equal suffrage.

We believe that the greatest good of the home, the State, and the nation is advanced through the operation of equal suffrage. The evils predicted have not come to pass. The benefits claimed for it have been secured, or are in progress of development. A very large proportion of Colorado women have conscientiously accepted their responsibility as citizens. In 1894 more than half the total vote for governor was cast by women. Between 85 and 90 per cent of the women of the State voted at that time. The exact vote of the last election has not yet been estimated, but there is reason to believe that the proportional vote of women was as large as in previous years.

The vote of good women, like that of good men, is involved in the evils resulting from the abuse of our present political system; but the vote of women is noticeably more conscientious than that of men, and will be an important factor in bringing about a better order.

This was signed by the governor, three ex-governors, our Senators, both Members of Congress, and ex-Senators, the chief justice and two 11 associate justices of the supreme court, three judges of the court of appeals, four judges of the district court, the secretary of state, the State treasurer, State auditor, attorney-general, and the mayor of Denver, the president of the State University, the

president of Colorado College, the representative of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the vice-regent of the Mount Vernon Association, and the presidents of thirteen women's clubs, most of them prominent society women.

During the session of the legislature last winter there were three women in the house. We met upon terms of absolute equality; no thought of incongruity or unfitness seems to have arisen, and at the same time those little courtesies which gentlemen instinctively pay to ladies were never omitted. Each of the ladies was given a chairmanship, one of them the printing committee; and I may state incidentally that the bill for that session was lower by thousands of dollars than for any previous session. The women were as frequently called to the chair in committee of the whole as were the men. One of them was placed upon the judiciary committee at the request of the chairman. Every honorary committee appointed during the whole session included one or more of the ladies, the very last being a committee of three to wait upon the senate to inform them that we were ready to adjourn sine die. The speaker appointed the three ladies, and as we delivered our message we were greeted by applause led by the president of the senate.

I should like to speak at length upon the work of the Civic Federation, which is a nonpartisan organization of women working in the interest of good city and county government, and carrying on at the same time an educational and philanthropic work. I should like also to speak at length upon the woman's club movement, which, beginning in 1895, marks an epoch in the history of our State. Our State federation now numbers about one hundred clubs, representing a united membership of 4,000 individuals. These clubs are largely occupied in studying social and economic questions, earnestly seeking for the best methods of educating their children, reforming criminals, alleviating poverty, and securing purification of the ballot; in short, striving to make their city and their State a cleaner, better home for their children. Their work receives added encouragement from the knowledge that, by their ballots, they may determine who shall make and administer the laws under which these children must be reared. The home has always been conceded to be the woman's kingdom. In the free States she has but expanded the walls of that home that she might afford to the inmates, and also to those who unfortunately have no other home, the same protection and loving care which was formerly limited to the few short hours of the day and the few short years of childhood passed beneath the parental roof.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN UTAH. By Martha Hughes Cannon.

The story of the struggle for woman's suffrage in Utah is the story of all efforts for the advancement and betterment of humanity, and which has been told over and over ever since the advent of civilization.

The final struggle came between the contending factions at the time when the National Government announced its willingness to receive 12 Utah as one of the proud sisterhood of States. An organized and well-directed effort was made to have the constitution of the new State recognize the equality of the sexes. This movement was directed by the noble and unselfish women of our State, who never faltered when discouragements were plentiful, and whose names are immortalized by the unqualified success of their efforts. Among them were veterans who had been trained in the early seventies to exercise the freeman's prerogative. They determined that in our organic law there should be an unequivocal declaration, which should place man and woman upon an exact equality with regard to their political rights.

Their persistent efforts were combated step by step. Day by day in the constitutional convention the question of woman suffrage was debated with unquestioned ability. Inch by inch our opponents contested the ground, until, after a most serious and thoughtful deliberation, and after a thorough hearing had been permitted, the measure was made part of the proposed constitution of Utah. But those in opposition still refused to yield. The proposed State constitution had to be submitted to the people; it had to run the gauntlet of a popular vote. Those who believed it to be ill advised to grant women the franchise therefore appealed to the people to vote the measure down. It was the only portion of the constitution over which there was any very considerable disagreement, and the issue was made clean cut and clear. The result was decisive and exceedingly gratifying, for an overwhelming majority of the men of Utah voted to adopt the constitution, and thereupon the forty-fifth State entered the Union making no discrimination on account of race, sex, or religion.

The history of the struggle in our State for equal rights is full of interest, and it could be recounted with advantage. But, after all, the results which have been attained speak with such unerring logic and vindicate so completely the argument that woman should take part in the affairs of government, which so vitally affect her, that I point to the actual conditions now existing in Utah as a complete vindication of the efforts of equal suffragists, and as the most cogent of all reasons which can be advanced why woman should have the right to aid in nominating and electing our public officers.

I can, in all sincerity, say that there is a strong and cumulative evidence that even those who opposed equal suffrage with the greatest ability and vehemence would not now vote for the repeal of the measure. The practical working of the law demonstrates its wisdom and verifies the claims which were advanced by its ardent advocates. It has proved to the world that woman is not only a

helpmeet by the fireside, but she can, when allowed to do so, become a most powerful and a most potent factor in the affairs of the government.

None of the unpleasant results which were predicted have occurred. The contentions in families, the tarnishment of woman's charm, the destruction of ideals, have all been found to be but the ghosts of unfounded prejudices. "The divinity which doth hedge woman about like subtle perfume" has not been displaced. Women have quietly assumed the added power which always was theirs by right, and with the grace and ready adaptation to circumstances peculiar to the women of America, they have so conducted themselves that they have gained admiration and respect while losing none of their old-time prestige.

Before women were granted suffrage they had ideas upon public questions. Suffrage gave them opportunity to give practical expression to their views. They gave more attention to political affairs. They studied political economy more earnestly. They familiarized themselves with public questions, and their mistakes, if they have made any, have not thus far been brought to light.

Women have acted as delegates to county and State conventions, and represented Utah in the national convention of one of the great political parties held in Chicago in 1896. They have acted upon political committees and have been part in political management, and instead of being dragged down, the criticism which was feared, their enfranchisement has tended to elevate them. They availed themselves with most gratifying results of the privilege of voting, and, under our system of the reformed Australian ballot, they found that the contaminating influence of the ballot of which she had been told was but a bugbear, born to fight, produced by shadows. They learned that to deposit their vote did not subject them to anything like the annoyance which they often experienced from crowds on bargain days, while their presence drove from the polls the ward workers and the strikers, who had been so obnoxious in the past.

Through the courtesy of the governor and the approval of the State senate they have been given places upon various State boards, and in the last legislature, in both the senate and the house, they represented the two most populous and wealthy counties of Utah. The bills which were introduced by women in our State legislature received due consideration, and a majority were enacted into laws. Whatever they have been required to do they have done to the full satisfaction of their constituents, and they have proved most careful and painstaking public officers.

No one in Utah will dispute the statements I have made. To the people of that young Commonwealth, destined by its manifold resources and the intelligence of its men and women to become the Empire State of the Rocky Mountains, I refer you. I give you this reference in the fullest

confidence that, with scarcely a dissenting voice, they will say to you that woman suffrage is no longer an experiment, but is a practical reality, tending to the well-being of the State.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN IDAHO.

By William Balderston.

Idaho is one of the quartette of intermountain States that have inscribed the principle of equal suffrage upon their escutcheons. It is the only one of the four in which the reform was effected by amendment of the constitution. Colorado had a provision under which the question could be submitted by a majority of the legislature to a vote of the people and Wyoming and Utah were fortunate enough to incorporate this great fundamental principle in their constitutions when they were admitted as States; but in Idaho we had to secure a two-thirds majority in each branch of the legislature for submission of an amendment, secure a majority vote for the amendment at the polls, and in the end make a contest before the supreme court to have that popular majority declared sufficient to engraft the amendment upon the constitution.

However, the contest throughout was comparatively simple, and the victory was clean-cut and decisive. The story of "Suffrage in Idaho; how and when granted," can therefore be quickly told.

The secret of success achieved lay in the fact that the indorsement 14 of the political parties was secured. The really hard fighting was done in the campaign planned to capture the party conventions, and when this was accomplished there was little left for the originators of the movement to do.

The subject cause up in the legislative session of 1893, a resolution being introduced to submit an amendment to the constitution to extend the right of suffrage to women. There was no organization at that time, nor had the matter been generally discussed in the State. While a good vote was secured for the amendment, it lacked the necessary two-thirds majority. It was, however, the beginning of the campaign, for the friends of the reform then determined that the matter should be brought up again at the next session with sufficient support to carry through a joint resolution submitting the question to popular vote. It was felt it would not be worth while to waste time and energy in effecting an organization in advance of the submission of an amendment. Those interesting themselves in the matter believed the political conventions could be induced to favor submission of an amendment, and that this could be accomplished without any preliminary organization.

This proved true. The Republican and Populist conventions of 1894 favored submission. The Democrats did not commit themselves on the subject. The legislature elected that year was composed almost entirely of Republicans and Populists, there being only two Democratic members. When a joint resolution submitting an equal suffrage amendment to a vote of the people was brought forward it met with practically no opposition, and was passed with only a few scattering votes in the negative.

Following this achievement the friends of the cause proceeded to organize for the campaign that was before them. The National American Woman Suffrage Association entered the field promptly. Organizers were sent into the State, and before the year closed there was a creditable organization. It was the belief that the most effective work that could be done was that of securing the indorsement of the political parties. This feeling was shared by the local suffragists and by the representatives of the national organization, who were on the ground which the time for the opening of the campaign of 1896 approached. There were four parties in the field and each committed itself to the amendment, though one of the resolutions was not very emphatic. The planks on the question were as follows:

Republican: We favor the amendments to the constitution of this State proposed by the late Republican legislature, including equal suffrage for men and women, and recommend their adoption.

Silver Republican: We favor the adoption of the proposed amendment to the constitution of the State providing for the extension of the right of suffrage to women.

People's Party: Believing in equal rights to all and special privileges to none, we favor the adoption of the pending woman's suffrage amendment to the constitution.

Democratic: We recommend to the favorable consideration of the voters of the State the proposed constitution amendment granting equal suffrage, believing that the great question should receive the earnest attention of every person as an important factor in the future welfare of the State.

An active campaign was at once inaugurated, the State association being assisted in every way possible by the national organization, while Colorado women sent a worker into the field to aid in the work. The great strength of the movement lay in the fact that all the parties were committed to the return and no effective opposition could be organized.

When the votes had been counted it was found that 12,125 had been cast for the amendment and 6,282 against it. But there were over 20,000 votes cast for State officers, and the question at

once arose whether the amendment had secured a constitutional majority. As is 15 so common when amendments are submitted, a large proportion of the voters failed to vote on the question, though the vote was much larger than was cast for other amendments submitted at the same time. The constitution provides that "if a majority of the electors shall ratify the same, such amendment or amendments shall become a part of the constitution." It was a very serious problem that was presented to the friends of equal suffrage, for the rock was one on which, in other states, the will of majorities of those voting on particular questions had been wrecked. The State board of canvassers held that the amendment had not carried, and it became necessary to go into court to have the point settled. There the cause was again victorious, the court unanimously holding that the amendment had been adopted.

The proceedings were in the nature of review of the proceedings of the board. In deciding the case the court said, in part:

Experience has shown that it is almost, if not quite, impossible to secure an expression from every elector upon any question, and above all upon a question of all amendment to the constitution; and it is equally difficult to ascertain the actual number of electors at any given time. To rely upon the vote cast upon some other question at the same election would be entirely unsatisfactory, and such a construction is, we think, at least impliedly negative by the provisions of section 3, article 20 of the constitution. While it is true that some 10,000 or more electors have been entirely indifferent upon the question of the adoption of this and other amendments, still all were—must have been—fully advised as to the importance of the questions submitted; and should their indifference be taken as conclusive of their opposition to the amendments, upon what rule of honesty or righteousness can this be claimed? Is it not more reasonable, as well as more righteous, to say that in a matter about which they manifest such indifference their silence shall be taken as assent!

We hold that the amendment under discussion is adopted, and has become a part of the constitution of the State of Idaho.

RESULTS OF SUFFRAGE.

On the results of equal suffrage in Idaho there is yet only a little to be said, but that is distinctly in its favor. There has been no general election since the ballot was placed in the hands of women, but in the town elections that have occurred the new voters took an active and intelligent part. These elections, however, were featureless, and there is little to learn from them respecting the success of the new departure, excepting in the case of Boise, where an election was held in July that afforded an opportunity to test the benefits of equal suffrage—a test that proved most satisfactory to the friends

of the reform. The issue in the campaign was that of street improvement. The large property owners were generally opposed to the improvement program because of the expense involved in it for them, and they effected a very aggressive organization to carry the election. As their candidate for mayor they selected one of the foremost citizens of the place, a man who has always commanded the unbounded confidence of the public. They hoped and expected that the prestige of his name would carry the ticket through, but they failed to comprehend the motives that would actuate the women in casting their votes. The anti-improvement candidate was one who, with other things equal, would have been the choice of the women, but they were distinctly in favor of beautifying the streets, and they voted the improvement ticket. They subordinated personal preferences to the principle involved in the contest, and justified the confidence of those who have always believed that, as voters, they would constitute a great reserve force that could always be depended upon to do the right thing in time of emergency.

A most interesting result of the law was observed during the session of the legislature last winter. In Idaho there had been a law legalizing gambling. Up to the time of the adoption of equal suffrage it would have been impracticable to repeal it, but when a bill was introduced last winter for that purpose it went through with a large majority.

The majority for it was universally credited to the fact of the addition of the woman element to the electorate.

I can add only that, with the limited experience that Idaho has had with the new order of things, it is well pleased with the change. I have no doubt that the future will bear out this impression; that equal suffrage will be justified by its fruits; that Idaho will be stronger, better, purer, and more progressive in the years to come because of the fact that the best half of its population has been given a voice in the selection of those who make and administer its laws.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES By Helen Blackburn

With the year 1897 the agitation for extension of the parliamentary franchise to women in the British Isles has entered on its fourth decade, and that with the most marked sign of progress yet recorded.

Between 1867 and 1897 the question of parliamentary suffrage has been debated in the House of Commons on sixteen different occasions, and on the last, February 3, 1897, the bill to extend the parliamentary franchise to women passed second reading by the decisive majority of 71, a majority of each party present and voting.

Although it did not reach the further stages essential to its progress, this division has placed the measure on firmer ground than at any previous period, and shows that the forces which work for success have steadily increased throughout the thirty years during which the question has been before Parliament in this country.

The first pioneers of this movement thought they had but to point out the injustice of excluding women who fulfilled the qualifications required of men to have it remedied forth with, for, to use the words of the general of the movement, the late Miss Lydia Becker, "It is not as women that we are taxed, and the vote should follow the same rule." But events showed that women had to do more than claim equal representation for equal taxation; they had to tread down a gradually formed and therefore deeply rooted prejudice against their taking any part in public affairs. They had to prove their citizenship to a public that had forgotten they ever had been citizens.

The first decade was a time of sowing seed, a time of educational agitation; the second decade at its beginning was full of hopeful anticipation, roused by the approach of the reform act of 1884, which extended the franchise to agricultural laborers, to be followed by a period during which the pressure of party strife on other subject left the question under parliamentary eclipse for a season. Meantime the roots were striking deeper into the public conscience, with the result seen in the vote of 1897.

The experience of all these years, during which the activities of women have been roused (aided largely by the modern facilities of intercommunication, cheap postage, and cheap press), has shown that women can originate, organize, and carry on work of great value to the community in many different directions. Those years have witnessed the growth of many organizations, originated, planned, officered by women, 17 which now ramify through the land for the public good—organizations for the care of girls, the after care of prisoners, the training of nurses, the nursing of the poor, the spread of sanitary knowledge and of technical training, etc.

Government has from time to time shown itself cognizant of the value of the experience women can bring to bear on public questions by such appointments as those of 4 ladies as subcommissioners on the labor commission of 1892, and 4 ladies as members of the royal commissions of inquiry into the management of pauper schools; also by the appointment of several women inspectors of factories, poor law inspectors, and inspectors in the educational department, and of 68 lady visitors in many, though not yet in all, of the local prisons of England and Wales.

Moreover, the steady increase in the numbers of women elected as guardians of the poor shows that the general public has grown more conscious of the efficient service which women can render to the community. Women who have once served are almost invariably reelected, when willing to

stand again, while others are frequently elected in fresh places; so that whereas thirty years ago there was no thought of women as guardians, now they are to be found in almost every county, nearly a thousand actually serving at this time, and probably more will be elected at the approaching triennial elections in April next. The triennial school-board elections which took place in November last present a similar experience—the old and tried members all reelected, and often at head of the poll, and the total number gradually increasing.

When Lord George Hamilton, M. P., resigned the chairmanship of the London school board in 1895, on being appointed secretary of state for India, he said in his farewell speech to the board:

As this was the first time he had ever had the pleasure of being associated with ladies in an administrative capacity, he should like to say that no part of the work was more effectively performed, authority better maintained, and the amount of work done in the time greater, than in those committees upon which the ladies served.

Women are also proving their intellectual powers, and the idea that women could not assimilate the severe studies of the universities has had to be abandoned in face of the high average of ability shown by women in all university examinations, and especially in those classical and mathematical studies which were supposed to be least accessible to them.

The older universities—Oxford, Cambridge, Trinity College, Dublin—still hesitate to ratify the certificates they grant to women by conferring the corresponding degrees; but all the younger universities—London University, Durham University, Victoria University, the Royal Irish University, the Scottish University, the University of Wales—all open their gates wide to women.

Side by side with their effective work—partly, no doubt, because of it—each of the several modifications of our systems of local government which have been made during the period under review has placed women on a perfectly equal footing with men in all matters that relate to the local franchises of town, county, district, and parish councils, respectively, as well as of boards of guardians and school boards. In all these elections the general testimony is that women use their votes in good proportion to their numbers on the register, and use them with intelligence and discretion.

Also, it should be remembered that of recent years women have done 18 much direct political work in connection with the large political organizations of the chief parties in the State.¹

¹ Writing in the Primrose League Gazette after the general election of 1895, a correspondent says: "I am disposed in appraising the relative results of our efforts to attribute our success in

the proportion of six-tenths to our sisters and four-tenths to our brothers. I have no doubt this difference is accounted for by the fact that men, being occupied in business pursuits, have but their surplus time to give, while women are able to devote a large portion of their day to such work."

The Right Hon. C. T. Ritchie, president of the board of trade, expressed himself indebted in his election to a large degree to the help of women in canvassing and getting voters to the polls. He had never seen anything like it before.

Thus in many ways women are vindicating their claim as citizens to direct representation, and thus it has come to pass that at the general election of 1892, and again of 1895, the proportion of candidates who expressed themselves in favor of granting the vote to women rose rapidly, while those who expressed themselves opposed were very few.

The present position may be given in the words of an address issued in the autumn by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies:

The second reading of the women's suffrage bill was carried in the House of Commons of February 3, 1897, by a majority of 71, and not only by a majority of the House, but by a majority of each party present and voting. This fact places the question of women's suffrage in a new phase, and its friends have only to continue to press it upon the attention of Parliament and the public in order to render it necessary at no distant date that it should be dealt with by the Government of the day.

This has been the history of nearly all important measures of reform. They have very rarely been placed on the statute book by private members; but private members, by repeatedly bringing a particular question before the House, give the opportunity for its full consideration by Parliament and the country, so that in due time it takes its place as a Government measure.

In the Australian colonies progress has been more rapid than in the mother country.

The New Zealand legislature, after an agitation of seventeen years, gave equal suffrage to women in 1893. "The electoral act of New Zealand (1893)" for amending and consolidating the electoral law admitted women to equal suffrage with men, Maori women included. The premier of New Zealand, the Hon. H.J. Seddon, when in England for the celebration of the Queen's jubilee said that this law — had been a complete success. When the law was first passed, some of us were very doubtful of it. Some years ago I voted against women's suffrage, but in 1893 the head of the Government, Mr. Ballance, pledged the ministry, of whom I was one, to carry it through. Mr. Ballance became ill, the task of carrying through the bill fell on my shoulders, and although, as I have said, I was not overconvinced of its wisdom. I was in honor bound to see that it was passed. It has now been law

sufficiently long to remove it from the experimental stage and to show how it will affect the home life of our people. The best proof of its success may be found in the fact that there is not even whispered suggestion of repealing it. It has come to stay.

The bishop of Auckland (New Zealand) speaking at the Church Congress held in Nottingham (England) in September last, said:

Our young New Zealand clergy would also be able to show from personal experience how the conferring of the parliamentary franchise on all our women over 21 years had led to no harm or inconvenience, but that the men of New Zealand were wondering why the women of the colony had remained so long without the right to vote at parliamentary elections.

In South Australia equal suffrage was conferred in 1894, and the premier, the Hon. Charles Kingston, on his visit to England for the jubilee, expressed his appreciation of women's suffrage in his own colony.

The premier of Victoria, Sir George Turner, also on his visit to England, expressed his approval of women's suffrage, which had already 19 passed the lower house in Victoria by a vote of 2 to 1 vote, though rejected by the upper house. The premier has since his return announced his intention to introduce an electoral reform bill which shall include women.

As regards to the Continent of Europe:

In Belgium, France, and Germany the attention of the leaders of the women's movement appear to be wholly occupied with reforms urgently required in the civil law. In Italy (where widows can vote by proxy) and in Holland committees have been formed within the last year or so for promoting the suffrage movement. The subject has been several times discussed and has received considerable support in the Norwegian Storting.

In Finland, very soon after the second reading in the English House of Commons, a movement was made to have the measure introduced, and a petition to that purpose brought before the Finland Landtag.

THE INDIFFERENCE OF WOMEN. By Alice Stone Blackwell.

It is often said that the chief obstacle to equal suffrage is the indifference and opposition of women, and that whenever the majority of women ask for the ballot they will get it. But it is a simple

historical fact that every improvement thus far made in the condition of women has been secured, not by a general demand from the majority of women, but by the arguments, entreaties, and "continual coming" of a persistent few. In each case the advocates of progress have had to contend not merely with the conservatism of men, but with the indifference of women, and often with active opposition from some of them.

When a man in Saco, Me., first employed a saleswoman the men boycotted his store, and the women remonstrated with him on the sin of which he was guilty in placing a young woman in a position of such publicity. When Lucy Stone tried to secure for married women the right to their own property, women asked with scorn, "Do you think I would give myself where I would not give my property?" When Elizabeth Blackwell began to study medicine, the women at her boarding house refused to speak to her, and women passing her on the streets would hold their skirts aside so as not to touch her. It is a matter of history with what ridicule and opposition Mary Lyon's first efforts for the education of women were received, not only by the mass of men, but by the mass of women as well. In England when the Oxford examinations were thrown open to women, the Dean of Chichester preached a sermon against it, in which he said:

By the sex at large, certainly, the new curriculum is not asked for. I have ascertained, by the extended inquiry among gentlewomen, that, with true feminine instinct they neither entirely distrust, or else look with downright disfavor on so wild an innovation and interference with the best traditions of their sex.

In Eastern countries, where women are shut up in zenanas and forbidden to walk the street unveiled, the women themselves are among the strongest upholders of these traditional restrictions, which they have been taught to think add to their dignity. The Chinese lady is as proud of her small feet as any American remonstrant is of her political disabilities. Pundita Ramabia tells us that the idea of education for girls is so unpopular with the majority of Hindoo women that 20 when a progressive Hindoo proposes to educate his little daughter it is not uncommon for the women of his family to threaten to drown themselves.

All this merely shows that human nature is conservative, and that it is fully as conservative in women as in men. The persons who take a strong interest in any reform are always comparatively few, whether among men or women, and they are habitually regarded with disfavor, even by those whom the proposed reform is to benefit. Thomas Hughes says, in *School Days at Rugby*:

So it is, and must be always, my dear boys. If the Angel Gabriel were to come down from heaven and head a successful rise against the most abominable and unrighteous vested interest which this poor old world groans under, he would most certainly lose his character for many years, probably

for centuries, not only with the upholders of the said vested interest, but with the respectable mass of the people whom he had delivered.

Many changes for the better have been made during the last half century in the laws, written and unwritten, relating to women. Everybody approves of these changes now, because they have become accomplished facts. But not one of them would have been made to this day if it had been necessary to wait until the majority of women asked for it. The change now under discussion is to be judged on its merits. In the light of history, the indifference of most women and the opposition of a few must be taken as a matter of course. It has no more rational significance now than it has had in regard to each previous step of women's progress.